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SUBJECT: TURKEY: TENSIONS REMAIN HIGH WHILE UNREST SPREADS THROUGHOUT
SOUTHEAST

REF: A. ADANA 60

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[1](#)1. (SBU) Summary: Violent civil unrest abated in Diyarbakir and Batman over the April 1-2 weekend, but picked up elsewhere in southeast Turkey. The press reported that demonstrators in Kiziltepe set fire to the ruling Justice and Development Party (AKP) provincial offices and two banks, while police shot and killed two protestors. After the in-hospital death of three demonstrator previously wounded during unrest in Diyarbakir, the death toll in Turkey's southeast has risen to twelve, since demonstrations began on March 28 in Diyarbakir protesting the killing of PKK members in Mus (see reftels). The media report that a PKK-affiliated group issued an April 2 warning that it will attack tourist sites. End summary.

[1](#)2. (SBU) A Consulate Adana contact in Kiziltepe told us that the city was quiet on April 3, with some shops opening for business at mid-day, but the mood was still tense. Another contact told us that people were fearful of what might happen next. A sub-governor told our contact and other people to avoid leaving their homes. Both contacts told us that two people had been killed, 20 people have been wounded and as many as 300 people detained over the weekend. One contact confirmed press reports that one of the people killed during the weekend unrest was Ahmet Arac, the son of main opposition Republican People's Party (CHP) Kiziltepe General Secretary Ramazan Arac. Both our contacts in Kiziltepe expressed concern that the violence and unrest would continue to spread to other cities. Our contact said that the police required the relatives of the two people killed to hold quiet funeral ceremonies at night to avoid sparking further unrest.

[1](#)3. (U) Elsewhere in the southeast over the April 1 and 2 weekend, civil unrest in solidarity with the recent unrest in Diyarbakir continued in some places and abated in others, although overall tension remained high throughout the southeast region:

--The media reported that in Diyarbakir businesses opened, but tensions remain high. Since public demonstrations ceased on

March 31, police have reportedly been conducting unannounced raids on homes and businesses. More people have reportedly been detained as a result of these raids. The press reported that 236 of 546 people detained to date have been ordered held in custody and then reportedly transferred to already overflowing jails in Mardin and Nusaybin.

--Similarly, in Batman businesses opened, but the mood remains tense. The Batman mayor announced that the windows in 500 businesses throughout the city had been smashed during the unrest, for a cost to the city of approximately 20 million Turkish Lira (approximately 15 million USD).

--Press reports from Hakkari's Yuksekova district said that police attempted to disperse an unruly, stone-throwing crowd on April 1. Jandarma forces were called into town. Shots were fired at security forces from an unspecified shooter, with one bullet hitting a police vehicle, according to the press. Eight people have reportedly been arrested on charges of assisting and harboring terrorists and causing damage to public property.

--In Sirnak's Silopi district, located on the border with Iraq, police intervened with tear gas and opened fire on protestors attempting to lay a black wreath at the AKP's provincial headquarters building, according to the media.

--In Van, police intensified security measures after receiving a tip that pro-Kurdish Democratic Society Party (DTP) members would hold a press conference and some groups would carry out demonstrations. The press reported that a 100-vehicle military convoy, including tanks and other armored military vehicles, passed along the main street of the province.

--The media reported that in Adana, police, using water canon and tear gas, dispersed a crowd, comprised mostly of children, who shouted pro-PKK slogans and burned tires. Some shops reportedly did not open on April 2.

--April 3 press reports said that 1000 members of the Democratic People Initiative gathered in front of the local DTP headquarters in Agri. The group marched to, and threw stones

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at, the AK Party Provincial headquarters building. Police intervened with tear gas and water canon. No arrests were reported.

14. (U) The press reported on April 3 that the PKK-affiliated Freedom Falcons of Kurdistan (TAK) issued a warning on April 2 for foreigners to not come to Turkey, and threatened to carry out attacks on travel agencies, hotels, tourist destinations and leisure places across Turkey.

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